MINUTES

OF THE

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD AT

MOUNT NEBO CHURCH,

WASHINGTON PARISH,

LOUISIANA,

ON THE

TWENTIETH, TWENTY-FIRST AND THIRD DAYS

OF

OCTOBER, **1832.**

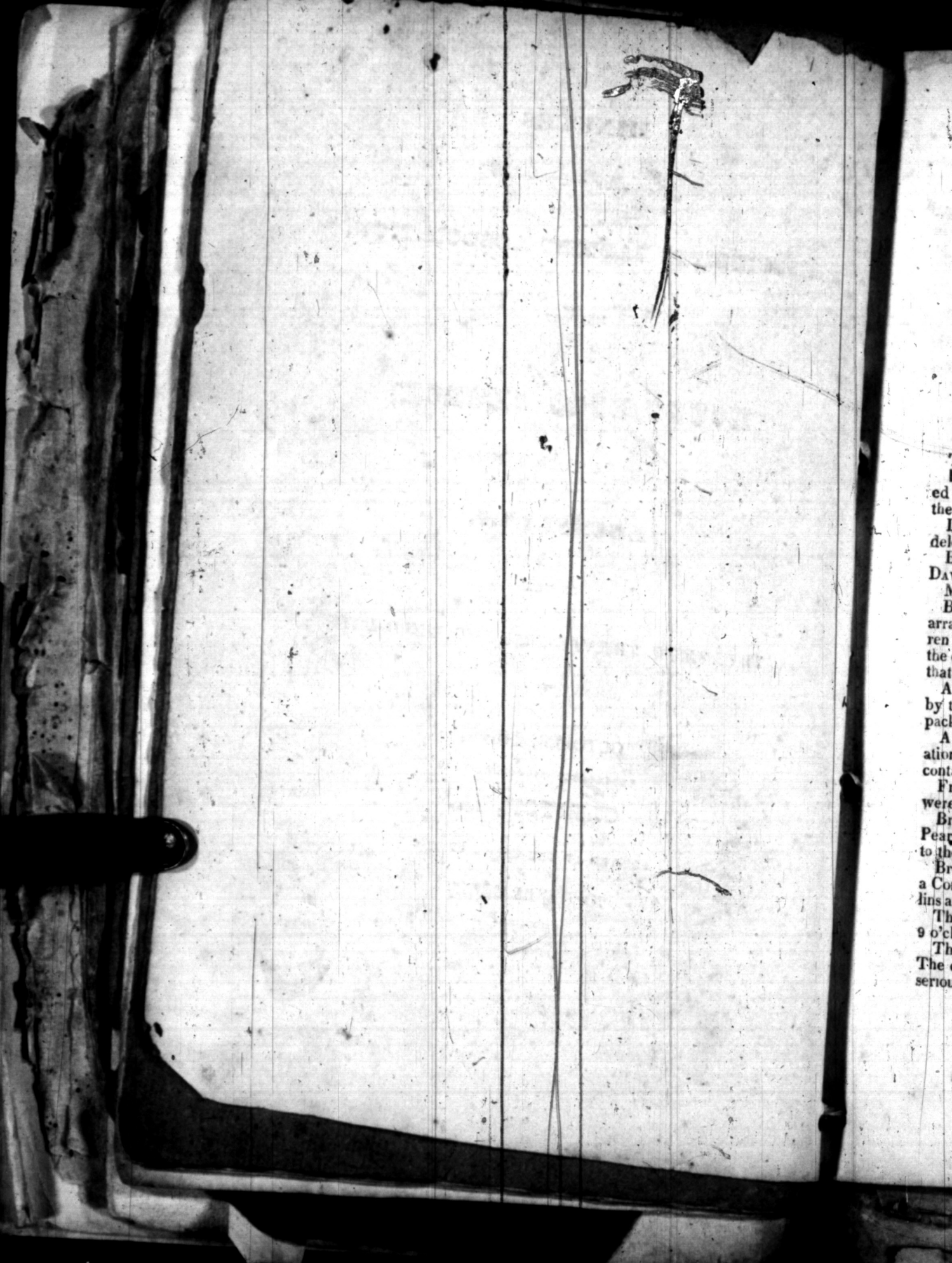
****

CLINTON, LA.

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE

"OLIVE BRANCH."

1832.



MINUTES.

Saturday, October 20th, 1832.

The Association met according to adjournment.

Brother J. CAIN, having failed to attend, brother Jesse Young, preached the introductory sermon, from 1st Peter, 5th chap. 9th verse, "Feed the flock of God, which is among you."

Letters from seventeen churches was read, and the names of their delegates enrolled.

Brother CHARLES FELDER, was chosen Moderator, and brother DAVID LEA, Clerk.

Ministering brethren present, not delegated, were invited to seats.

Brethren Bankston, Quinn and Young, were appointed a committee to arrange the preaching during the Association; who reported that brethren J. Crawford, E. Courtney and D. Collins, preach on Lord's day, in the order of their names; and brother Bailey conclude by exhortation;—that brethren Fairchild, Bailey and Falkinberry preach on Monday.

A letter of correspondence was received from Pearl River Association, by the hands of her messengers, D. Collins and J. Crawford, with a package containing their Minutes.

A letter of correspondence was received from the Leaf River Association, by the hand of their messenger, Thomas C. Hunt, and a package containing their Minutes.

From the Union Association, a letter of correspondence and Minutes were received by her messengers, J. T. Fairchild and J. E. Bailey.

Brother Lea was appointed to write a letter of correspondence to the Pearl River Association;—Brother Quinn, to the Union;—Brother Gray, to the Leaf River;—Brother Bankston, to the Louisiana.

Brother E. Courtney, with the Moderator and Clerk, were appointed a Committee of Arrangements and Revision, who invited brother D. Collins and other ministering brethren to sit with them.

The Moderator prayed, and adjourned the Association until Monday 9 o'clock, A. M.

The Lord's day, it is hoped, was a good day to many precious souls. The congregation was large, solemn and attentive; numbers appeared seriously affected. The brethren appointed to preach, it is believed,

preached with the spirit and the understanding also; and from the favorable appearances, there are reasons to believe that good was done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Monday, October 22d, 1832.

Met according to adjournment—prayer was made by the Moderator, and the Association proceeded to business:

1st. The report of the Committee of Arrangement and Revision was read and received.

2d. The circular letter was called for, read and received.

3d. The following brethren were appointed messengers to the different Associations:—E. Courtney and C. Felder, to the Pearl River; E. Courtney and W. Bryan, to the Leaf River; and J. Young and J. Cain, to the Union.

4th. *Resolved*, That the brethren who have served as messengers to our sister Associations, receive one dollar per day, for the time they were necessarily held from home, in serving.

5th. *Resolved*, That Thomas R. Cheatham, John Jenkins and William Knight be, and are hereby appointed a committee to employ a suitable Baptist Minister, or Ministers, to ride and preach under their direction within the limits of this Association; and it shall be the duty of any Preacher, thus employed, to certify to the committee the number of days they have served, sermons preached, and places where; on which certificate, it shall be the duty of the committee to give a draft on the treasurer to pay said Preacher at the rate of one dollar per day, out of any funds he may have in his hands, for missionary purposes.

6th. Brother E. Courtney appointed to write the next Circular Letter.

7th. Agreed that this Association adjourn to meet at Hephzibah church, Parish of East Feliciana, Louisiana, on the Saturday before the third Lord's day in October, 1833;—that brother C. Felder deliver the introductory sermon; and in case of failure, brother E. Courtney.

8th. The corresponding letters were read and received.

9th. *Resolved*, That brother E. Courtney superintend the printing and distributing of six hundred copies of these Minutes; and that he draw on the Treasurer for the funds necessary to defray the expense of the same.

10th. *Resolved*, That brethren Quinn, Cheatham and Gray, be appointed a committee to audit the Treasurer's account.

11th. *Resolved*, That this Association do discountenance all traffic in spiritous liquors, beer, cider, or bread, within such a distance of our meetings as to in any wise disturb our peace and worship; and do, therefore, earnestly request all persons to refrain from the same.

12th. *Resolved*, That this Association, feeling deeply sensible of the lamentable declension of Religion in our Churches, throughout their

borders; and the violent spirit of political strife and commotion, threatening the peace and safety of our beloved country; and the fearful march of the Cholera, and other wasting pestilences abroad in the land; and the more fearful and general prevalence of vice and dissipation; threatening to swallow up our rising generation in the vortex of misery, shame, and eternal ruin: do recommend all the Churches, in our connection, to set apart, from all worldly cares, the Friday before the fourth Lord's day in November next, for solemn Fasting and Prayer to Almighty God, to interpose his gracious and powerful arm, in reviving the Churches with the pouring out of His spirit and grace upon them, and exercise a paternal influence and care, over the destiny of the Nation, in restraining the spirit of violence; and causing the pestilences to depart from the land; and granting to the youth of this age, the influence and exercise of His truth and grace, to qualify them for usefulness here, and everlasting happiness hereafter.

13th. *Resolved*, That the Association expresses its thanks to the Church and vicinity of this place, for their particular kindness and liberality during our meeting.

14th. Report of the Auditing committee, in the hands of the present treasurer, for Association purposes, - - - - - $ 39,56¼
Due from J. M. Mumford, former treasurer, - - - - 101,12½
Contributions from the Churches, - - - - - - 55,37½

$196,06¼

PAID TO MESSENGERS.

To Leaf River Association, E. Courtney $13—A. Cotton $11, $24,00
To Pearl River Association, Charles Felder, - - - 9,00
To Union Association, J. Cain $10—R. Quinn $9, - - - 19,00
Paid for printing Minutes for 1832, - - - - - 50,00

Ballance, - $ 94,06¼

MISSIONARY FUND.

Public collection taken at the Association, on Lord's day, 1832, - - - - - - - - - - - $58,87½
In the hands of the treasurer, - - - - - - 48,62½
From Mount Zion Church, - - - - - - - 3,50

$111,00

After a short address and prayer by brother E. Courtney, the Association adjourned in harmony, which prevailed in all our deliberations. May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all—*Amen*.

CHARLES FELDER, *Moderator*.

DAVID LEA, *Clerk*.

A TABLE OF THE CHURCHES

COMPOSING THE

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

FOR 1832.

[☞Names of Ministers in small capitals.]

NAMES OF CHURCHES.	NAMES OF DELEGATES.	Baptized.	Received by letter.	Dismissed.	Excommunicated.	Restored.	Dead.	Total in Fellowship.	Contributions.
Bethel,†									
New Providence,	John Jenkins. T. R. Cheatham.		1		1		1	42	5 00
Ebenezar,	Mathew Jones.*	3				1		20	4 00
Newhope,†									
Eastfork,	CHARLES FELDER. John C. Wilson.		1	2	2	1	2	22	3 00
Zion Hill,	William Right. Moses Seals.				2		1	54	3 50
Shiloh,	John Tison,* Charles Edwards.*	1						13	2 00
Jerusalem,	David Lea, W. P. Neil.						2	41	4 00
Perce's Creek,	William Simpson.		1		1			12	1 50
Hephzibah.	E. COURTNEY. R. Nettles.	9	3		1			79	13 25
Mount Nebo,	P. Bankston. Wm. L. Sibley.		1	1				71	4 00
Mars Hill,	JESSE YOUNG. Richard Thack.	2		2	1	1		19	3 00
Feliciana,	S. M. Bryant.*	6	3				2	212	1 00
Mount Zion,	G. Gray. Haley Cotton.	6		4	1		1	32	2 25
Hopewell,	John Ford,			1			1	33	2 75

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Mississippi Baptist Association, convened at the Mount Nebo Church, Washington Parish, Louisiana, on the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-third days of October, 1832—to the Churches they represent, sendeth Christian salutation.

Beloved Brethren:—

We rejoice in the persuasion, that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious; that you enjoy much of the Saviour's presence, and are favored with abiding evidences of his love in your hearts. We know, however, that the highest spiritual privileges enjoyed, whilst in the body, will not afford an entire security from those enemies, and exemption from those evils, which are the assailants of your peace, and obstacles to your progress.

Whilst, therefore, we unite with you in expressions of gratitude and love to God, we deem it our duty and privilege, to admonish you, in brotherly affection, to vigilance and circumspection, in the all important cause of the Redeemer.

Permit us, therefore, to address you on the subject of *Christian watchfulness and prayer*. Were the Church not in an enemies land, or subject to attack from the enemies camp, these exercises and privileges might, with less criminality and danger, be dispensed with. But such is not the fact;—here she has no continuing city; her members are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, in the midst of enemies—even a combined host.

The importance of watchfulness and prayer will be admitted by all; but permit us, brethren, to enforce their practical use, by adducing a few passages from the word of God. Mathew chap. xxvi. 40, 41 verses, "And cometh unto the disciples and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, what, could ye not watch with me one hour? watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation;" Mark chap. xiii. 33, 37 verses, "Take ye heed, watch and pray for ye know not when the time is,—and what I say unto you I say unto all, watch;" Colossians chap. iv. 2 verse, "Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving;" First Peter chap. iv.

Sandy Creek,†	:	}								
Natolbany,	: :	} William Drennon.				2			21	1 12½
Gallilee,	: :	} John Straughan.							11	2 00
Salem,	: : :	} Joseph Rabowrn.								
		} Richard Quinn.			3	1			31	3 00

*Absent members.
†Churches not represented.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

Sandy Creek,†	:	}					
Natolbany,	: :	} William Drennon.					
Gallilee,	: :	} John Straughan.		2		21	1 12½
Salem,	: : :	} Joseph Rabowrn.				11	2 00
		} Richard Qumn.		3	1	31	3 00
							$55 37½

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7 verse, "But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

A subject upon which the mind of the Lord has been so often expressed, should not fail to secure general attention; whatever diversity of opinion on speculative subjects may prevail, on this there must be an agreement of sentiment; for all who have been born of God must readily feel the weight of responsibility.

Watchfulness and prayer, in their scriptural import, are exercises which are intimately connected, not only as it regards the order in which they stand in the word of God, being frequently united, or contained in the same sentence, but also as it respects their performance; for where either is omitted, the other, if practised at all, is badly performed.

Watchfulness signifies, to be on our guard, or carefully to observe the movements and insinuations of the enemy, and cautiously avoid their temptations. At the head of the host of enemies whith whom the Church has to contend, stands Satan, the deceiver of the brethren. He is called the God of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. From long experience he is skilled in seductive arts, and knows when to assail the christian.

But perhaps in no way has Satan effected greater injury to the Church of Christ, than through the medium of strange and unscriptural doctrines, the danger of which is just in proportion to the nearness of their approximation to the truth; a system or scheme of religion that is essentially defective in its vitals, and is based upon false premises.—However many good things it may contain, however many truths it may embrace, it wears them only as a garb, and is, therefore, the more dangerous, base, and destructive. St. Peter says, "There were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old, ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men turning the grace of our God, into lasciviousness; deceivers that would deceive the very Elect, if it were possible."

Brethren, be vigilant and watchful, for your adversary, the Devil, is seeking whom he may devour. St. Paul says, now "I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them,—for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ;—having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away."

The next enemy, with respect to power, with whom the christian has to contend, is his own wicked heart. Well do the scriptures say, "The heart is deceptful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it." This fleshly enemy wars against the soul. St. Paul says, "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, for I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I see another law in my members waring against the law of my mind,—but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection,"

Brethren, to do honor to the cause, in which we profess to be engaged,

to maintain the true christian character; to advance the cause of Zion, and to experience spiritual enjoyments, we must exercise a holy discipline over our appetites and passions, and not only guard against, but labor to subdue and bring into subjection, every inclination to evil.—Christ says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself daily, take up his cross and follow me." Those who indulge vain imaginations, angry, proud, resentful, murmuring and impatient dispositions, may be considered as acting contrary to that self-denial which christianity requires.

St. Paul say, "mortify your members which are upon the earth; for we are not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live;" (that is being lively, enjoying much of the power of divine grace in the soul.) The christian finds from experience, that the work of self-denial, or holy watchfulness over his fleshly inclinations, is not the exercise of a moment, or of particular seasons; but that it should be his habitual employment, in all the common avocations of life, and in all the various duties, which may, at any time devolve upon him;—hence that sacred rule, "Whether ye eat, or whether ye drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Brethren, permit us to say, in the language of brotherly admonition, guard against the *political struggles of the day;* not that we would interfere with your political, any more than your civil or religious liberties; but it is that political fire, to which we have reference, that has produced so much commotion in our country, being well calculated to create disturbances, produce mutual dislikes, stir up strife and divisions, not only among those who had previously lived in sociability and friendship, but even among brethren. These things ought not to be; followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, should abstain from every appearance of evil; should provoke to love and to good works, and as much as in them is, live peaceably with all men.

The world, with its temptations, is another very powerful enemy, and should be carefully guarded against. It is in league with Satan to deceive and to destroy; its fascinating riches, honors, pleasures and profits, are directed to the eye, and to the heart. But how great must that evil be, which would produce poverty in our souls, and barrenness in our lives; which opposes our growth in Godliness, and so disorders the soul, as to subject it to the assaults of the enemy, which war against it; for a prevailing eagerness in our desires for the things of this world; an abiding thirst after perishing treasure, would soon interrupt the serenity of heavenly mindedness, counteract spiritual desires, and implant cares in the heart, which pierce with a secret sting. The apostle Paul says, "They that will be rich fall into temption and a snare," "and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." We are to mark the apostle's words:—He does not say that they, who are rich, fall into such dangers; but they that will be rich, whose desires are placed upon the accumulation of riches; whose minds are covetously

inclined, for an inordinate desire after riches is covetousness; such may expect to be bewildered and entangled by the snares of the devil.—Brethren, avoid undue engagedness in affairs of a worldly nature. Industry and economy are christian virtues; but let the first risings of immoderate worldly and carnal affections, and desires, be crushed.—Let the appearance of sin be avoided; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Permit us, dear brethren in the ministry, to address you with tender concern. Important are your stations; and highly responsible, your obligations. Should not the ministers of the Gospel of Christ recollect that they are standing between the living and the dead; and connected as they are, with the Church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth; are you, notwithstanding the sacredness of your calling, the importance of your work, inordinately concerning yourselves with the traffic of this world; its politics, its riches, or its honors? Should you not rather show, by the gravity of your conduct, that your minds are fixed on the importance of your stations, as watching for immortal souls. For the nature as well as the extent of your works, and equally so your responsibility in its performance, is clearly pointed out in the word of God. Ezekiel chap. iii. 17 verse, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me." Isaiah chap. lviii. 1 verse, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." Acts chap. xx. 28 verse, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

We see no reason why the present ambassadors of Christ, should feel a less responsibility than those first sent out by him. The same Gospel is to be proclaimed as was preached by the apostles;—the souls of men are of the same worth at every period of the world;—the Saviour's blood is not less efficacious than it was when first poured out for sin. The Lord Jesus Christ promises to be with the heralds of His Cross, to the end of the world. Then let the directions given by St. Paul to Timothy sink deep into your hearts:—"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; neglect not the gift that is in thee; meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all."

As we do not wish to exceed the proper limits of a circular, we will come to the subject of prayer:—Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, with an humble confidence, to obtain the object of our desires, through the alone mediation of Christ; and is called the prayer of faith; for without faith it is impossible to please Him. The manner of prayer is two fold, secret, and public. Secret prayer was taught by Christ in his sermon on the mount: saying, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy father which is in

secret, and thy father which seeth in secret, shall reward the openly." This language of our Lord Jesus, is not only imperative, but calculated to elevate the thoughts, and stimulate the soul, in holy devotional exercises to God; secret devotion or private prayer, is obligatory on, and is the inestimable privilege of all believers at least; hence saith the Apostle Paul, "Pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God, in Christ Jesus concerning you, for in him we live and move and have our being; every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of light, men ought therefore to pray and not to faint," for the nature of our imperfections are such, that we always need mercy and grace;—we are week, therefore need help—we are empty, therefore need supplies—we are exposed, therefore need protection. How reasonable then, is it, that we should be often at the throne of Grace; not only in sending up our ejaculatory prayers, in the bustle of business, but that we should have daily and regularly set times for secret devotion, for the heart that is always in the business of the world will be always worldly; but our minds should be quite aside from the bustle of business, and our whole soul engaged with God; for there is no way to have our affections in heaven, but to be often at the gate of it, contemplating its unspeakable grandeur, and soul attracting joys.

Public prayer is that performed either in the family, or congregation; we shall, however, confine our remarks to family prayer, which is more particularly obligatory, on those who are heads of familes, having the control of their households.

We are asked by some of our brethren, if their is either precept or example in the new testament for family prayer; it is highly probable that this inquiry is made only by such as live in its entire neglect, and is intended by them as an apology for such omission—we answer them, however, in the affimative; but let it be remembered that our conduct in this case is not governed exclusively by the new testament, we are sure that that the old and new testament, being productions of the same unerring and immutable spirit, must, and do, speak a consistent language; for the pious, in old testament times, as well as at the present, worshipped God in their familes. Abraham, in his pilgrimage, made various removes, but where ever he chose a residence, he immediately built an altar to the Lord, and there called on his name, and God said, "I know Abraham, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord."

Joshua, also, worshipped God in his family, he said to the people of Israel, "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord;" but how could Joshua resolve for his family, as well as for himself, that they should worship the Lord? Most certainly he maintained stated forms of social worship in his house, and required their attendance; and the same is true of Job, of David, and many others, Jeremiah chap. x. 25 verse, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know the not, and upon the families that call not on thy name." To say nothing of the morning and evening sacrifice, which was accompanied with prayer, we will come to new

testament times. Our blessed saviour often took his disciples apart for prayer, and other acts of worship. We read of his going up with them into a mountain to pray, and of his being alone praying, and his disciples with him, he was alone in relation to the multitude, whom he had just before dismissed; but in the company of his disciples, who were his family, they were with him while he prayed, Acts of the Apostles, chap. x. 2 verse "A devout man and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always;" verse 30 "And Cornelius said, four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house." This passage is plainly expressive of three facts—first, That Cornelius was a man that feared God —secondly, That his family also feared God, and united with him in social worship—thirdly, That he took the lead in family prayer; for we are expressly told, that at the ninth hour, which was the hour of prayer, he prayed in his house. The apostle Paul to the Ephesian Church, says, chap. vi. 18 verse, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." This was an address to the Church in general; and if the Apostle intended nothing more than secret prayer, it were unnecessary that he should have proceeded further than the forepart of the sentence, that is to say, praying always; but that he might be distinctly understood, to embrace family prayer, he adds in imperative language, with all prayer, which is synonimous with, every manner of prayer, whether secret, family, or congregational.

Without taking further time on this subject, we believe that none but those who have no disposition of heart, to worship God in their families, will attempt to deny new testament authority for family prayer.

Some, however, plead the want of ability, as an apology for the habitual neglect of family prayer, but where the heart is rightly disposed, it does not require any uncommon abilities, to discharge family worship in a decent and becoming manner. Solomon says, "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips, for of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaketh." Plain, short sentences, uttered just as they rise in the mind, will be best understood by those who join with you, and they will be more pleasing to God than any vain expressions that could be made.

Brethren, it is lamentable that so many in our Churches, live in the neglect of family prayer, and by such, we fear, the closet is but seldom resorted to. But are there any who pray not at all? "ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things," Jeremiah, chap. xviii. 13 verse. Yes, ask now among the heathen, see if any of their numerous Gods are treated thus.

But to conclude, is there no worthy object to interest our mind and excite our zeal? Has the welfare of Zion become less important? or, are our obligations lessened by the continued goodness and forbearance of God? Is the love of the redemer less to be admired? Is God less worthy to be adored and loved? or does he refuse to dwell in our hearts

and smile on our Churches without a cause, or need we be any longer at a loss to account for that lukewarmness which many of us experience, and of which many of you complain.

Brethren, it is high time to awake out of sleep, for the cause of God cannot prosper among us, or our Churches increase, under the prevalence of that laodicean spirit of lukewarmness and indifferency, and that cold, torpid state of lethargy and inactivity, and slothfulnes, that is so very apparent; then awake to righteousness and sin not, knowing that God will neither have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, nor suffer his own gifts to rival him in the hearts of his people.